

# Promises

**nb\_richie (shipit)**

## Promises by nb\_richie (shipit)

**Category:** IT (2017), IT - Stephen King

**Genre:** (mentioned) - Freeform, Aged Up, Alcohol, Angst, M/M, domestic abuse

**Language:** English

**Characters:** Beverly Marsh, Eddie Kaspbrak, Richie Tozier

**Relationships:** Eddie Kaspbrak/Richie Tozier, Reddie - Relationship

**Status:** Completed

**Published:** 2017-11-09

**Updated:** 2017-11-08

**Packaged:** 2020-02-01 13:35:37

**Rating:** Not Rated

**Warnings:** Creator Chose Not To Use Archive Warnings

**Chapters:** 2

**Words:** 3,239

**Publisher:** archiveofourown.org

**Summary:**

Eddie deserves better

# 1. Broken Promises

## Author's Note:

Aged up- seventeen years old

There are certain things that Richie just knows. He knows that Beverly isn't the slut everyone seems to think she is. He knows that Georgie likes paper boats. He knows that clowns are creepy and should be avoided at all costs. They're everyday, obvious facts of life that he never forgets.

Richie also knows that Eddie's too good for him.

It isn't some grand revelation he has on one of the many nights he lies awake in his bed, thinking. He's known that for a long time. Richie just didn't let it stop him from flirting, or buying flowers, or asking Eddie out to a movie or kissing him or telling him that he loves him.

Now, on the night of their one year anniversary, he isn't at the diner where he was supposed to meet Eddie. No, he's drinking and smoking at Beverly's house. She doesn't know he's supposed to be with Eddie, but if she did, she would be angry, and probably scream at him. He'd deserve it.

Richie doesn't tell her about the plans he was supposed to have, instead taking a long slug of the beer they snuck from her father's fridge. "Wanna go for a walk?" She asks in that airy, unfocused voice she only gets when she's buzzed.

Without waiting for an answer, she gets to her feet and pulls Richie up with her. He nearly trips over the frayed laces of his ratty converse, but manages not to fall. She drags him outside, sans jacket and beer, and lights up a cigarette the moment they get out into the fresh air.

"Can I bum one?"

Bev rolls her eyes, but pulls out a second, lights it with the tip of her

own and hands it to Richie. The first puff, tasting of ash and slight mint makes him choke at first, but then it settles in his lungs and he doesn't mind as much. Eddie'd have a fit if he knew Richie was smoking again. He was supposed to stop last month. Oh well, he's already hurt Eddie a lot tonight.

His one consolation is that he won't have to face Eddie until morning, and by then, he'll have steeled himself to make the right decision: leave the one person who's loved him unconditionally. It'll hurt like a bitch, there's no denying that even now, but Richie knows he has to do it.

Walking in silence, Bev and Richie are both lost in thought. If he had to hazard a guess, Richie'd say she's thinking about the poetry slam Ben wants to take her to tomorrow night. His own mind has much heavier thoughts, weighing down so much he doesn't realize they're walking past the diner.

"Richard *fucking* Tozier!"

He doesn't know what's worse: Eddie cursing, or saying his full name. Maybe it's the combination of anger and hurt in his voice when he grabs Richie's shoulder and forces him to look at Eddie, at the tear tracks on his face.

"I thought maybe you got hurt, or something, because you weren't answering your phone! I was worried sick about you! I didn't think you were so low you'd ditch me!"

A sinking feeling settles low in Richie's stomach, but he tries to ignore it. "Eds, I—"

"Don't 'Eds' me! You've been drinking, Richie. And now you're smoking again. You promised me you quit!"

He did promise. He also promised to be at dinner tonight.

Eddie's hands hit Richie's chest and he pushes him, harder than Richie thought he could, making him stumble backwards slightly. Part of him knows he deserved it, and part of him is pissed that Eddie shoved him. The latter is what wins.

“Did you seriously just fucking push me?”

“I waited for you for *two hours!*” Eddie yells.

Okay, so Richie was a dick. He always is, that’s why he’s so shit for Eddie, but he hasn’t been shoved by Eddie since they were kids. And it was always playful. Never once have they ever been so angry with each other that they physically fought. Richie doesn’t think before he moves. His jaw clenches, his hands close into fists and he takes a step forward. Since he started working for Mike’s grandfather at the farm, he’s gone from scrawny to fairly muscular. He’s terrifying when he’s mad, and sometimes he forgets that.

He barely has time for another step before Eddie scrambles back, away from him, hands going up to protect his face. Wide eyes peer between his forearms, and Richie’s heart breaks in two. The only time Eddie has ever looked like that, he was about to be or in the middle of being beaten up by Henry Bowers and his friends.

But he’s looking at Richie.

Eddie looks like he’s so scared he’s going to cry, and it’s because he thinks Richie’s going to hurt him.

It’s then that Richie hears Beverly behind him, saying his name over and over again like a mantra, telling him to take a deep breath. Don’t do something he’ll regret. Stop it. She thinks he’s going to hurt Eddie too. He turns to her and she looks terrified.

“Richie. Look at me. You need to calm down.”

“Do you seriously think I would *ever* lay a hand on you, Eds?”

Eddie lowers his arms slowly, but he still stands like he wants to run away. ‘I don’t know what to think! You’re always off getting drunk off your ass or smoking and you always promise me you’re gonna quit and then you’re off doing that instead of coming to our *Anniversary Dinner!*’

There’s nothing Richie can think to say. He can’t keep making excuses.

“It’s because I want to break up, Eddie.”

Maybe he should have tried to be more delicate. The tears that had begun to dry on Eddie’s face start up again, and Richie just watches them fall. He doesn’t bother to try and wipe them away, or comfort Eddie. Richie doesn’t deserve to try and make someone so precious feel better.

“What?”

“You fucking heard me, *babe*. I want to break up. I don’t want to see you anymore.”

Every word feels like a punch in the gut. Another promise broken: Richie pinkie-swore that someday they’d move in together and be free of the wretches that were stifling parents.

“I’ll drop off your shit tomorrow.”

The soft sweaters. The tapes. The photos. The memories. They’re already packed into a neat little box with Eddie’s name on it sitting by Richie’s bed. Before he went to Bev’s, he packed it all up so that he wouldn’t have to do it in the morning when he goes to see Eddie.

“I don’t want it back,” Eddie whispers. “I don’t want anything you’ve touched. Don’t ever fucking talk to me again.”

Richie starts to come closer to him on instinct from years of protecting Eddie from the older kids that love to torment him, then he realizes that he can’t do that anymore. Eddie doesn’t want him to, and he’d be better off without Richie anyway. Everyone would be.

“C’m’ere Eddie, you can spend the night at my place, okay?” Sniffling, Eddie lets Beverly put an arm around his shoulders and guide him away.

For the first time in forever, Richie is completely alone. He did this to himself, so he allows no self-pity. That can come with the self-hatred that will surface in the morning when he realizes that he just lost the best thing to ever happen to him.

Head down, Richie keeps walking, all the way back home, so he can

burrow under the covers of his bed and sob and drink and smoke and pray that Eddie'll be happier now.

## 2. Kept Promises

It feels like it's been three hours since Eddie checked his watch, but when he looks, it hasn't even been a full minute.

He's sifted through a million scenarios in his head. Maybe Henry Bowers saw Richie walking to the diner and dragged him off to beat him. Maybe Richie got hit by a car. Maybe one of the other losers is hurt and Eddie doesn't know. Maybe Richie's parents took it a step too far and hurt him worse than they ever have.

It's nine o' clock.

Richie is two hours late and Eddie can't just sit there anymore, he has to find out if he's okay. A small part of him wonders if Richie didn't show up on purpose, but he pushes it down. No matter what, Richie has never missed a date. Even if he's bleeding or looks ready to collapse, he always comes. Something has to be wrong.

After paying the cheap bill for the milkshake he's been drinking, Eddie walks outside. He'll go to Richie's house first, see if he's there or maybe his parents know where he is. Eddie takes a deep breath as he quickly crosses the sidewalk at an intersection. Panicking will do him no good.

Then he sees Richie and Bev walking together.

"Richard *fucking* Tozier!" He yells, feeling a sick sense of satisfaction at how afraid Richie looks to see him there. Richie deserves to be scared of getting caught.

When he comes closer, Eddie sees the cigarette in Richie's hand, smells the alcohol on him. It's like a punch in the stomach. Richie promised to stop smoking and drinking. Now, here he is with Bev after missing dinner, and doing both things.

"I thought maybe you got hurt, or something, because you weren't answering your phone! I was worried sick about you! I didn't think you were so low you'd ditch me!"



Richie has the decency to appear sorry, something that only fuels the emotions that are taking Eddie over.

“Eds, I-“

He has no right, no fucking right to call him Eds right now.

“Don’t ‘Eds’ me! You’ve been drinking, Richie. And now you’re smoking again. You promised me you quit!”

Eddie is hurt, and he’s mad, and it feels like all the air is gone from his lungs. He can barely see straight. Behind Richie, Bev is staring at them in shock. She didn’t know Richie was supposed to be with Eddie, that much is clear.

He shoves Richie. Hard.

Hard enough to make Richie- six foot two, built-like-a-rock Richie-stumble.

“Did you seriously just fucking push me?”

An apology comes to the tip of Eddie’s tongue. He feels disgusted with himself because he just shoved his boyfriend. He just shoved his best friend. Instead of saying he’s sorry, Eddie just yells again.

“I waited for you for two hours!”

The second the words leave his mouth, Richie straightens his back. The tendons in his jaw stand out as he clenches his teeth. Richie’s fists, which Eddie has seen break noses, are tightly curled at his sides. His cheeks are red and there’s a fire in his eyes that makes him unrecognizable.

“Rich? Babe?”

Richie doesn’t seem to hear him. He takes a step forward and Eddie automatically reacts the way he always does to a threat. He backs up. Covers his face. Prays.

Beverly starts yelling Richie’s name and telling him to calm down. Eddie would too, he usually does, but Richie’s never been this angry

with him. He's never been this angry, period. The only thing Eddie can think is that this is how he's going to die. He's going to die on the sidewalk because he shoved his boyfriend and said boyfriend is going to kill him.

Then Richie meets Eddie's eyes, and seems to come to his senses. He turns to Beverly. All the color drains from his face, and his rage fades. Once again, Richie has regret in his eyes, but there's tiredness beneath it.

"Do you seriously think I would ever lay a hand on you, Eds?"

"I don't know what to think! You're always off getting drunk off your ass or smoking and you always promise me you're gonna quit and then you're off doing that instead of coming to our Anniversary Dinner!"

Then Richie gives his reason why.

For a second, Eddie swears his heart stops. This can't be real, this can't be right. He starts crying before his brain can process that Richie isn't joking.

"What?"

"You fucking heard me, *babe*. I want to break up. I don't want to see you anymore. I'll drop off your shit tomorrow."

Something's really wrong because Richie sounds so cold, almost defeated. He's not smiling. The cigarette dangling from his fingers, forgotten until that moment, curls plumes of smoke around his wrist that Richie seems fascinated by.

"I don't want it back," Eddie says as loudly as he can manage, which is barely louder than a breath. "I don't want anything you've touched. Don't ever fucking talk to me again. I mean it."

Eddie doesn't mean it.

One of Beverly's arms falls around his shoulders as she leads him away. They're going back to her house, where Richie just spent the evening he was *supposed* spend with Eddie. He can't walk into that

apartment. Thinking about it makes him want to cry.

"I'm just gonna go home, I can't tonight," he chokes out, shrugging out from under Beverly's arm.

She calls after him, but he just runs. Somewhere along the way, he'll figure out where he's going. He can't go to Richie's like he normally does. He can't go home or to Bev's and look at the things that Richie has held or touched or made. Ben and Mike are at the library together. Bill's at Stan's house. There's nowhere to go. Eddie has no one to turn to.

So he eventually winds up at the quarry. It's too quiet without the other losers at his side, but it's nice to be alone while he sorts through his thoughts.

Richie missed dinner because he was drinking with Bev. Then Eddie shoved him. For a moment, he genuinely thought Richie would hurt him. And now, they aren't together.

Those are the facts, solid and indisputable. Eddie just doesn't understand why. They were so happy, and they had plans for the future and earlier that same day Richie told Eddie how much he loves him. What happened that caused this? Why would he suddenly just throw away everything they've worked so hard to build together? It just doesn't make sense.

Even though Richie never makes much sense, he has a pattern. Everything he does is predictable when you know him well enough. There's order in the chaos, one of the things that Eddie's always loved about him. But this breakup out of the blue- it isn't like Richie and Eddie wants to believe that there's some outside factor that made Richie do it. Someone was pressuring or threatening him.

That's what he wants to believe, yet he knows it isn't true. Nothing and no one scares Richie. Coming to terms with that realization makes the tears he finally managed to chase away come back full force. Richie did this because he wanted to break up, simple as that.

Eddie gets to his feet, brushes the dirt off of his pants, and walks home.

---

Three weeks later, it still hurts more than Eddie thinks it should. He needs to move on, but it's just too hard. Every day at school, he sees Richie, laughing with a new group of friends, one arm around a short brunette with fishnets and hair cropped close to her head. Of course Richie left him for a girl. He always knew, deep down, that Richie liked girls more, or at least too. Still, to see Richie moving on so quickly, and with some girl who's all over him is painful.

The other losers aren't happy either; Richie abandoned all of them, not just Eddie. They're worried too, because he looks worse every time they see him. His eyes get dark bags beneath them, his clothes become too loose, and he comes to school hung over or still drunk more often than not. Serves him right to be a mess, but they still don't want him to fall apart.

Eddie, in the middle of the fourth week after their break up, catches Richie after school before his new girlfriend can. "We need to talk."

"About what? We're not together anymore, Eddie. I'm not your friend," Richie growls, but doesn't resist being dragged back into the school.

Pretending he isn't hurt, Eddie takes Richie to the fourth floor janitor closet, where no one ever bothered them when they snuck out of class to talk or when they were avoiding Henry. At one point, Eddie had cleaned it up and made it into a comfy nook. The blankets and stolen pillows have a thin layer of dust on them.

"What do you want? I'm my girlfriend's ride home, so I can't stick around here, Eds."

*Girlfriend. Eds.* Both words make Eddie's stomach do somersaults.

"You owe everyone an explanation. You owe me an explanation. Seriously, Richie, what the fuck happened? You abandoned all of us!"

Richie won't even look at him.

"Just tell me. Even if it was something stupid, just tell me what I did that made you hate me," Eddie whispers.

“I don’t hate you. I could never hate you, Eds. Ever.”

“Then what happened?”

Richie’s eyes are still on the ground, and if Eddie didn’t know any better, he’d say that Richie’s going to cry. His eyes are glassy and his bottom lip is quivering, but Richie doesn’t cry. No one’s ever seen him do it.

“It’s not you I hate. I hate me, I hate that I’m not good enough for you or any of our friends. I hate that I keep breaking my promises to you. I hate that you deserve better. I hate that I hurt you. I hate that everytime I see you, I just want to kiss you and say I’m sorry.”

Then he starts crying. No, not crying. Sobbing. Richie covers his face with his hands and shakes and makes these pathetic, heart wrenching sounds. Eddie can’t remember ever seeing Richie like this before. He doesn’t know what to do.

“Rich? How do I help?”

Richie shakes his head, and drops his hands to open the closet door. He can’t hide the splotches on his cheeks or the teardrops still clinging to his long lashes. In baggy clothes, with unwashed hair, lips chapped, eyes dark with bags, and face tearstained, he looks awful.

“You look like you just got dragged through hell.”

“I have been,” Richie says solemnly. It’s not a joke, it has no punchline. “That’s where I’ve been for a *month*.”

He starts fast-walking down the now empty hallway, trying to go somewhere he can hide his emotions. That’s something he’s always been good at- hiding how he feels.

“Rich, stop. *Please*.”

Miraculously, he does. He stops dead. Richie doesn’t turn around or say anything, but he waits for Eddie to catch up. In the empty hallways, his heavy, shaky breathing is louder than it should be. He’s poised to run.

But Eddy won't let him run away again. He's not going to lose Richie twice.

He runs to Richie and wraps his arms around him, pulling him in for a tight hug. Richie cries harder against Eddie's shoulder, hands tightly clinging to Eddie's soft shirt. The two of them stay there for a long time, holding onto each other while Richie sobs apologies and Eddie comforts him.

"You're more than good enough, Rich. I promise."

**Author's Note:**

Catch me on tumblr @beepbeep-rich